



Konko Mission of Wahiawa
SPRING GRAND CEREMONY
 In Honor and Appreciation of our Life Force
Tenchi Kane No Kami Sama
 天地金乃神様 御大祭
Wed., April 13, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.
Sermon: Rev. Akinobu Yasutake
 (Waipahu Head Minister)
Naorai dinner will follow! Masks optional.
 *The time has changed to **6 pm** instead of 6:30 pm
 We will also be streaming on Facebook Live.

Sasete Itadaku

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa



"Sasete itadaku" (Being allowed to do things) was the first lesson I learned as a student minister in training, while I was enrolled at the Konko Church of Amagi more than 50 years ago. After spending my life with my wife here in Hawaii, I learned that the spirit of "sasete itadaku" could be an integral spirituality as a Konko believer. There seems to be no alternative and appropriate English term for the spirituality of sasete itadaku.

Sasete itadaku is an expression of mindfulness that is used by some people in Japan. When I tried to find the meaning of "sasete itadaku," I found there are so many strict detailed rules for the use of the term. But a simple explanation in English of "Sasete Itadaku" is a humble expression of being able to do something through the blessings of the higher power. There cannot be an English expression of the term is my impression. So this explanation may make no sense to some people, but I believe it shows the very spirituality of a Konko believer.

"Suru janai zo" (Don't merely say "I will do"). This was one of the usual expressions in the faith community at Amagi Church. Even eating a meal, we usually say "taberu" which can be used by ordinary people and it is an everyday expression. But at the

Amagi Church, we do not say "taberu" which means the act of eating. Instead, we use "itadakimasu" before eating food. We cannot use the expression of "taberu" in that given situation. "Itadakimasu" is a humble expression of partaking food. The act of eating food on the table is based on the spirituality of a person who practiced the Konko faith. The food on the table represents blessed food provided by the Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami. The food on the table is possible through the combined work of elements and people's hard work. Even a bowl of cooked rice involves countless elements provided by the Universe. This is not just an exaggeration. Rice is produced through the work of the Universe and Earth. People have the convenience to purchase rice straight from the store. However, not many realize the many elements involved for a sack of rice that is available for you to buy. Countless numbers of people are involved in the process of production, harvesting and transportation for it to be available to the consumers. But the basic elements that help produce rice is the work of Heaven and Earth. Soil, water, sunlight, adequate temperature, gravity and care. We are not able to produce a single seed of rice on a petri dish using human knowledge.

Nowadays, scientists have been manipulating rice and many other foods we eat through genetic engineering. I am not sure if it is the right thing to do to manipulate the seeds that have been existing for tens of thousands of years.

Even if there is food on the table, if we are unable to eat and swallow because of some physical limitations we simply cannot eat.

Summing up our sense of gratitude for a bowl of rice and any other meals, we sincerely extend our gratitude for the food being prepared and our ability to eat. Our thoughts of gratitude is expressed in the term of "Itadakimasu."

Some Konko ministers place a tray of food on the altar and say a prayer of gratitude for food and healthy body which can accept the food. Some other Konko believers say that they cannot partake food unless they hold the food held in their hands and raise it above their heads in appreciation of the blessings before partaking.

I just talked about the food we eat in accordance with the Konko faith spirituality. Everything is possible only in the condition of blessedness of the Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami. This way of life can be applied to every aspect of our faith life.

Some believers worship their working places before they start the day's work and show their gratitude in prayer after finishing the work. They may use the expression of "Sasete Itadaku" in gratitude.

Even when you come to attend church services and other functions, please remind yourselves of the spirituality of "Sasete Itakaku."

The Founder Konko Daijin related the relevant messages in the following teachings:

"Practicing faith on your own will not bring divine blessings. Practicing faith with the support of Kami will." (III Gorikai Shui 39)

"When a wife goes to pick vegetables and prays to Earth while picking, she will receive divine blessings. Also, if those vegetables are boiled and eaten with a grateful heart, there will be no illness." (I Ichimura Mitsugoro 1-15).

Being aware of the blessedness of The Life Force, Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama, even for a bowl of rice or any other elements can make you a Konkokyo faith practitioner.

The Founder Konko-Sama Said

Everyone is now able to receive the blessings of Tenchi Kane No Kami because Konko Daijin received divine blessings first. If there is one true believer in a family, then all of the family members will become believers. If there is one family in a village who truly believes in this faith, all of the villagers will begin to receive divine blessings. Practicing faith is like one seed becoming ten thousand. Therefore, those who initiate faith should sow a good seed. If the seed is bad, it will be a bad start, and it will be difficult to raise no matter how hard you try. (III Jinkyukyogoroku 37)

Bulletin Board

Church Services for April 2022

- 1 Fri -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 3 Sun -Sunday Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
-Honolulu Church Spring Grand Svc (11am)
- 10 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Waipahu Church Spring Grand Service (11 am)
- 13 Wed -Spring Grand Service (6 pm)**
- 17 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 24 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)
- 29 Fri -Monthly Volunteer Activity at Wahiawa General Hospital LTCF (10 am to 10:45 am)

May 2022

- 1 Sun -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (9 am)
-Wailuku Church Spring Grand Service (11 am)
- 8 Sun -Hilo Church Spring Grand Service (11 am)

Monthly Volunteer Activity at Wahiawa General Hospital

We have been called back to volunteer at the long term care facility after a long hiatus due to the pandemic! Reiko sensei and Edna sensei will be going on Friday, April 29 at 10 am.

Konko Missions in Hawaii

- KMH Kyoten study group via Zoom. The main reference book will be "Voice of the Universe." Please join the study session and deepen your understanding about the messages of the Founder.
 - April 15 (Fri at 5 pm)
 - April 27 (Wed at 5 pm)
- KMH Ministers' Gathering on ZOOM Saturday, 4/16 (2-4 p)
Guest speaker: Rev. Michie Mukai (Konko Church of Sako)
- Community Engagement and Outreach Committee meeting will be held on April 22, 2022 at 3pm (ZOOM)

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

April

Gilbert Toshio Iwasa	4/9/1999
Zenji Takahashi	4/12/1966
Frances Shigeno Takahashi	4/13/2009
Yoshiro Kamitomo	4/16/2000
Kiku Takahashi	4/26/1967
Robert Mendoz	4/27/2006
Richard Yoji Noguchi	4/28/2017
Shinichi Furushima	4/30/1996
Rev. Masato Yoshino	4/30/2021



If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

The Life of the Founder

金光教祖の生涯 瀬戸三喜雄 金光教学研究所 紀要別冊教学叢書 2

The following is an English translation of a book titled, "Konko Kyōso no Shōgai" or "The Life of the Founder Konko Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto, and was published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center. The publication was made in 1980. There are many biographies about the life of the Founder Konko Daijin. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

No. 16 Page 47, 51

Completion of the housing project

The weather condition of raining that lasted for seven to eight days at the last stage of construction work. In order to fulfill the deadline designated by the Days and Directions, Bunji managed to complete the house building on time. Bunji moved to the new house on August 28. At first, he set up a Kami altar furnishing for Konjin deity. He asked Motoemon Kawasaki about the tradition of offerings to be placed at the altar.

Motoemon responded, "It would be appropriate to offer some steamed rice (kowameshi)." He specialized in carpentry for shrines and temples and had some expertise knowledge about the customs of religious traditions at the altar. Bunji offered feasts of food to the altar of Konjin deity and fulfilled his promise of reciting the prayer of purification and "Shingyo sutra" in gratitude. Bunji had some basic notion in his heart that no matter what irreverence he could have committed unknowingly, Konjin deity could forgive if he would extend his utmost sincerity.

Another death of ox

The following year, (1851) Bunji turned 38 years old. On May 29 of this year, his birth mother. Shimo Kandori had a bad case of typhoid fever and departed at the age of 69.

On July 16, newly obtained ox became ill. Because of the death of the former ox, Bunji responded quickly to call the animal doctor for treatment, but the ox died on July 18. Coincidentally, the date the ox fell ill and the day the ox died were exactly the same days, but different year. He became so depressed and felt something strange about the phenomenon. He pondered if there could be such an exact coincidence of the encounters. There could be some unknown force that caused the tragic eventualities. When he looked back at the past since he was adopted into the family, he had encountered seven deaths in the household. The household could be cursed to encounter the difficulties one after another. What could be the meaning of the instructive message forwarded by the adoptive father? They say "Cursed Seven Death of Konjin Deity" that if people committed irreverence unknowingly, they would have to make seven graves for their oxen and horses. Bunji wondered if these tragic eventualities could be attributed to the case of the cursed seven deaths in the family. If so what and how have I committed these irreverence against Konjin deity. Could the seven deaths in the family mean the curse of Konjin was over? Or I should worry for more tragic eventualities?

Bunji was tormented over the tragic encounters of the death of the family members in corresponding to the annual memorial days. More to it than that he could hardly bear the situation on which he could not find ways to clear the situation. He had no ways to identify the cause of the tragic eventualities. No matter whatever deities he extended his prayers, they had never responded. He learned that following the Days and Directions proved no validity at all. Even he extended a prayer of appreciation for protections and apologies for irreverence, there would have been no way to assure if his prayers would reach to Konjin deity. He had nobody to consult with. If there could be any way he could find the reasons for the family tragedies, he would have responded to them for sure. For all these things he was really regretful and wished to find out the cause of the difficult encounters.

Early in the morning of December 15 of the same year, Tose gave birth to a baby girl. The adoptive mother who was in the same year of the Chinese Zodiac year of the Boar, named her as "Kura." Hereafter, Bunji did not take any record in the "Oboe" for three years of period until he reached the age of 41. In accordance with the official record of the village, Bunji responded to take part in many occasions of wage-earning tasks in the village. At the age of 40, Bunji's father, Juhei Kandori departed following the death of his wife. He was 77 years old.

"Jitsui Teinei Kami-Shinjin"

In this manner, Bunji closed his life in the 30s. During his life in the 30s, some distinctive elements could be identified.

Whenever Bunji had determination to carry out anything, he tried to fulfill his initial objectives. He was open and willing to challenge innovative things. He accomplished most of the major endeavors in life, such as the construction of the toilet and the connected bathhouse, the storage gate, the main house, purchasing additional farm lands. Most of the village people tried to fulfill those endeavors in life. Bunji fulfilled those main achievements in life during his age of 30s. He also made a pilgrimage to the 88 Temples in Shikoku.

Bunji tried to fulfill whatever tasks he once engaged to the fullest extent. He out-worked the average people in the village. He tried to follow the rules of the Days and Directions so meticulously. He worked so diligently. He tried to seek any available medical treatments. He lived at the temporal shed for a long time in following the rules of the Days and Directions. During the pilgrimage of 88 Temples in Shikoku, he visited every temple no matter what the locations were. These behaviors could be distinctively identified in his way of life during the 30s.

The way he tried to fulfill whatever objectives he once attempted were accomplished. This could be attributed to his strong willed character. He was natural in his way of living and showed little stubbornness. These distinctive personal character could be attributed to two elements. One of his identical personal character is that he was consciously aware of being kind to others with deep considerations. Bunji visited his native house from time to time to see his parents. In those occasions, he visited the house wearing a pair of newly made straw sandals he made, when he left the house, he put on the used sandals in the house and left the new sandals for the use of the parents. When he exchanged rice with other farmers, he tried to give them the better rice. He showed his utmost sincere appreciation to the priests who conducted blessings with a generous gifts. Another distinctive character was his strong self-discipline. He didn't seem to mind sacrificing for his dedications. He managed to deal with any negative encounters with the heart of positivity. This spiritual preparedness could be identified as

Come check out the Wahiawa Kyokai Garden!

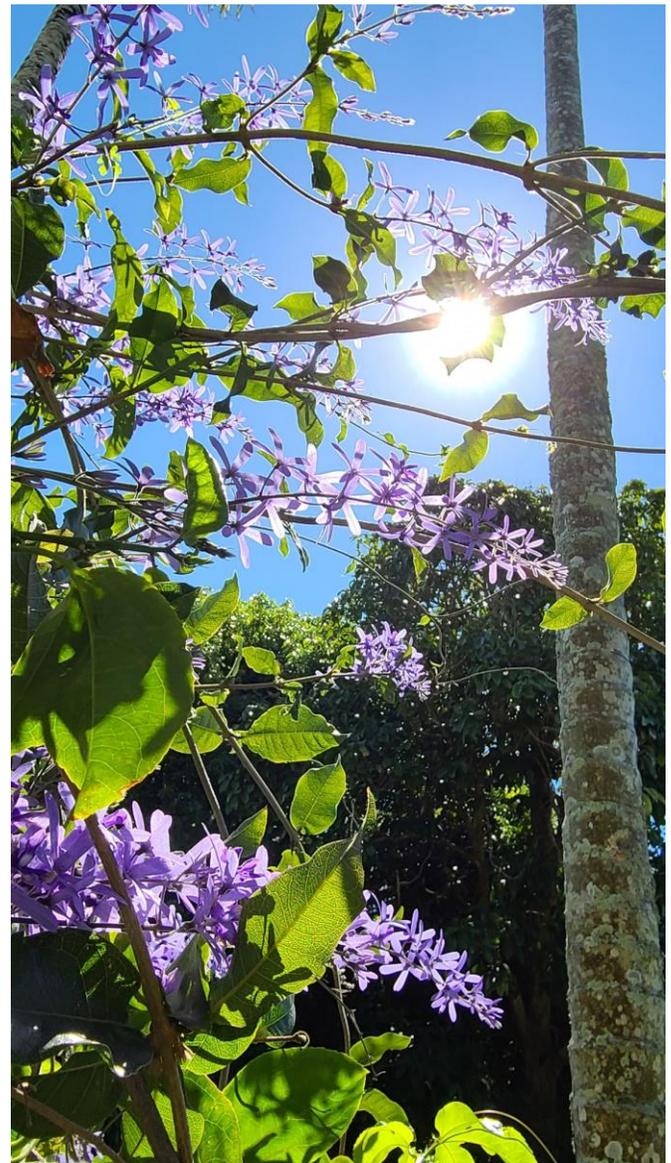
"*Omoi wake*" or conversion of the state of mind from negativity to positivity.

The way of life Bunji showed in his daily living could also be shown in his pursuit of faith. He visited the shrines and temples more than anybody else in the village. When he had to deal with the sickness of his children, he recalled, "Each time, I had a doctor give treatment, gave prayers to various kamis, went to shamanistic practitioners, and did all I could. Even after I prayed to kamis and buddhas, the victims were not saved. I stood by helpless. I lived with this constant frustration and futility" (Oshiraegoto Oboecho 2-10-5). In this manner, Bunji dealt with kamis and buddhas positively and thoroughly. He got engaged in his pursuit of faith during the period of his 30s. He tried to seek how he could fulfill the heart of Kami and Buddha; tried to offer adequate portions of gratuity in reflection of his extended nature of prayers. He never failed to evaluate his own attitude toward kamis and buddhas. The way Bunji lived his life, there seemed no distinctive differences between his daily living and his pursuit of faith.

Bunji tried to actualize himself with extended sincerity and positivity. At the same time, he tried to be well composed for anything and anybody involved in his life. His comprehensive use of his body and mind was identified as the way of "Jitsui Teinei Kami-Shinjin" which literally means use of his mind and body sincerely to the fullest extent and engaged in his pursuit of faith.

The heart he referred to in his way of life could be likened to a farmer who cultivates rice plants, as he tried to be like-minded with the heart of the rice plant. Such a mindset could clearly identify the needs of the rice plant. Our heart could respond spontaneously in joy and gratitude for the act of kindness forwarded to ourselves by anybody else whether we are consciously aware of it or not.

In this manner, Bunji manifested the way of "Jitsui Teinei Kami-Shinjin" in his life. In reality, Bunji didn't show any outstanding experiences in his faith life. He could not understand Kami's messages at this stage. On the other hand, he could revive the fortune of the household as he had endeavored and gradually accepted as an integral member of the village community. What could be the meaning of the different manifestations through his endeavor in life and his devotion in his faith life? Could there be something he had to overcome? Bunji ended his 30s in search of the answer.



Queen's Wreath/ *Antigonon leptopus*



Lemon drop Mangosteen/ *Garcinia Madruno*